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STATUS OF PREPARATION OF PUBLICATIONS, STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS
FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Contribution by the Women's International Task Force
(TERRA FEMINA)

The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached contribution by TERRA FEMINA. In January 1993 an international group of women met in Sintra, Portugal, to prepare a statement for the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights. The statement, entitled "Women and Human Rights" focuses on the injustices suffered by women and calls for a new awareness of women's rights.

STATEMENT ON WOMEN AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Prepared by the Women's International Task Force (TERRA FEMINA)
for the '93 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights

1. Human rights are a human creation. They grow out of the feeling of injustice which human beings experience in their bodies and minds when their humanity is abused or denied. Human rights introduce the idea of justice in the natural order of the world, thereby giving human existence a higher sense and purpose.
2. Human beings are both equal and different. The first and foremost human right is the right to existence. Humankind is made up of two sexes and this difference is the mainspring of life.
3. The acknowledgement of the existence of two sexes, equal and different, challenges the unipolar paradigm which encapsulates human diversity in the masculine mold and condemns women to social and political invisibility. This all-encompassing paradigm, based on military and economic power, science and technology, seeks to impose, for the first time in history, a single and unilateral definition of what the world and humankind should be regardless of the infinite diversity which is unique to our species.
4. At the eve of the 21st century, the irruption of the voice of women is a vital contribution to the praxis and discourse of human rights. It questions and reshapes the prevailing worldview based on the negation of the Other, of all others. Women's aspiration is not for inclusion in a sexually-indifferentiated society. Women's task and responsibility is to give full expression to their own history, culture and life experience, thus enabling humankind to regain its constituent and irrenounceable richness.
5. In today's world, the right of untold millions of women to a life with dignity is being denied by specific forms of violence and deprivation, ranging from the non-satisfaction of the most basic survival needs to rape and other forms of sexual abuse, such as wife battering, genital mutilation, kidnapping of girls, forced prostitution, selling of women by poor families, lapidation, repudiation and, most recently, the trafficking of women for sexual pleasure. The core of the ancestral role played by women in the family and community livelihood is being irrevocably disrupted by the structures of production and consumption intrinsic to the global economic order, thus leading to the evergrowing feminization of poverty. Likewise, the inalienable right of women to possess and command their own bodies is being negated by a wide array of legal and practical impediments.

6. Violence against women is widespread and long-standing. It cuts across ages and cultures, and persists unabated despite the adoption of legislation condemning most of these crimes. In the field of women's rights, the discrepancy between the legal framework and the daily reality is appalling. Women's debasement is still basically perceived as a domestic issue, a private matter. This pattern of invisibility and privatization must be overcome. The violation of women's freedom, dignity and integrity must be recognized as a major political crime. Human consciousness has yet to reach this basic realization. Today no country recognizes the right to asylum or grants refugee status on the basis of sexual discrimination or violence against women.
7. The present order of the world is inequitable and unsustainable. Globalization and uniformization coexist with and engender fragmentation and exclusion. Humankind is confronted with an unprecedented crisis of civilization. This awareness, deeply felt by a growing number of citizens of the planet, does not seem to affect either the power relations between States or the profit-oriented logic of the global economy. The weaker, the poorer, the more vulnerable, those who do not produce nor consume anything of marketable value, all these become expendable. The present order of the world excludes, rather than includes, the majority of the planet's population. Women are also deeply concerned with the power of science and technology divorced from ethics and life-sustaining values. Genetic engineering, with the risk of an unchecked manipulation of life, appears as unacceptable as the expendability of the poor and of the weak.
8. Women, who have suffered from invisibility and oppression, are in a privileged position to denounce this dehumanization. Women, for so long kept faceless and voiceless, stand today very close to the many who are not seen, who are not able to protect and defend themselves, who are not aware of their rights and of their own value. Women, the peacemakers and guardians of the sources of life, without whose caring and nurture humankind would not be fully human, have the inescapable right and duty to challenge the prevalence of the logic of military, political and economic power over ethics and human values.
9. The new awareness of women's rights will affect all fundamental political, economic, social, cultural and civil rights. These basic changes in human rights will in turn have far-reaching effects on democracy and development. Neither democracy will be able to conceal the existence of women and men behind abstract universal principles, nor will development strategies be able to disregard in its planning, implementation and evaluation women's needs, values and inputs.
10. In today's world, the safeguarding of human rights is the permanent responsibility not only of States and international institutions but, more than ever before, of the citizens of the Earth. Only people's awareness and involvement, both at the local and global level, can really ensure the strength of this emerging human consensus which underlies the cause of human rights. Following the compass of ethical values and daily practices which enabled them to ensure the permanence of love and the quest for happiness as the matrix of human life, women are called upon today to invent, together with men, a new more compassionate common future for humankind.



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Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Contribution by the International Council of Women

1. The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the statement submitted by the International Council of Women and nine other non-governmental organizations which seek to have the World Conference recognize that "women's rights are human rights".
2. These organizations request the World Conference to reaffirm the right of access of both women and men to reproductive health services, including family planning, as well as "the basic human right ... to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children" as included in the Proclamation of Tehran adopted by the International Conference on Human Rights in 1968.

Statement for the fourth Session of the Preparatory Committee for the
World Conference on Human rights

We, the undersigned non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, attach great importance to the forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights, its deliberations and decisions. We note that the Preparatory Committee in its Fourth Session will be focussing on the draft of the final document and we wish to bring the following points to the attention of the Committee for inclusion in the final document of the Conference under agenda item 11 'Consideration of contemporary trends in and new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of women and men, including those persons belonging to vulnerable groups'.

We strongly recommend that the Conference document recognizes that 'women's rights are human rights'. Although women are subject to certain violations of their rights because they are women, as in the case of rape, domestic violence and reproductive health it is important that any violations of their rights should receive the same priority and have access to the same channels of redress as other violations of human rights.

Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the right of the individual to life, liberty and security of the person. Denial of a woman's reproductive rights can endanger her life thereby, depriving her of the right to life. As was recognized by the World Conference on Safe Motherhood (1987) half a million women die annually from conditions arising from pregnancy related causes.

We attach great importance to a woman's right to adequate health and well-being as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to 'the enjoyment of the highest standard of physical and mental health' as set out in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Accordingly we recommend that the Conference document draws attention to the special needs of women within terms of their reproductive rights, which must include right of access to family planning and to other reproductive health services.

Signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and all regional human rights Conventions have agreed to ensure to all individuals human rights without distinctions such as sex.

Recognizing that discrimination against women contributes to their ill-health, States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women have agreed to 'take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning'. (Article 12)

They have also agreed to take all appropriate measures 'to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women the same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to exercise these rights'. (Article 16(e))

Recognizing the importance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in eliminating the *de facto* discrimination against women and the opportunity for the full enjoyment of women's rights, including reproductive rights and the eradication of harmful traditional practices which negatively affect the reproductive health of women, we recommend that the Conference document will insist that the same level of implementation is applied to this Convention as is applied to other human rights instruments.

We earnestly trust that the Conference document will reaffirm the right of access of both women and men to reproductive health services, including family planning, as well as the 'basic human right . . . to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children' as was included in the Proclamation of Teheran (para. 16) at the International Conference on Human Rights in 1968. We also trust that the World Conference will recognize the need for appropriate implementation mechanisms to ensure that these important human rights are universally enjoyed through services which are voluntarily provided and which ensure free and informed consent and access to the widest possible range of services.

Signed by:

Category I

International Council of Women
International Federation of Business and Professional Women
International Planned Parenthood Federation

Category II

International Federation of University Women
International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples
Medical Women's International Association
World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
World Young Women's Christian Association

Roster

Centre for Development and Population Activities
Commonwealth Medical Association



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Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Contribution from the Brazilian Society of Ostomates

1. The President of the Brazilian Society of Ostomates on 6 April 1993 sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights. The letter was accompanied by a petition bearing over 1,000 signatures calling for the World Conference to address the plight of these people.

2. People who have undergone ostomies require a special sac to be inserted in the abdomen to collect bodily wastes which, through congenital malformation, disease or accident, cannot be evacuated normally. These devices must be imported into Brazil and are very costly. This means that many of the 30,000 people with ostomies in Brazil - and thousands more in other developing countries - are unable to obtain them, and are thereby deprived of their human right to equal health care and their right to human dignity.



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Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Contribution from the American Association of Retired Persons,
Helpage International, and the International Federation on
Ageing

1. The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached statement submitted by three non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

2. The document points out that whilst the vast majority of elderly persons throughout the world continue to lead active lives, advanced age can also mitigate the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly when combined with factors such as gender, disability or race.

2. The paper applauds existing international instruments which recognize the special problems that the elderly may face; however, it points out that, with the exception of the United Nations Principles for Older Persons (General Assembly resolution 46/91), there is no universal international human rights instrument which provides for regular monitoring and review of the situation of older persons. It proposes that such a review could be achieved through the consideration of information concerning the elderly in implementing human rights instruments or through a new international instrument designed to deal exclusively with this situation.

STATEMENT SUBMITTED BY
THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS*
HELPSAGE INTERNATIONAL*
THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION ON AGEING*
for Agenda Item 11 of the Provisional Agenda of the World
Conference on Human Rights

We, the undersigned NGOs in Consultative Status, note with appreciation General Assembly Resolution 47/122, which puts forth the provisional agenda for the forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights. In particular, we welcome Agenda Item 11 which calls for a "Consideration of contemporary trends in and new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of men and women, including those of persons belonging to vulnerable groups."

In this respect, we wish to draw the attention of the Fourth Preparatory Committee of the population whose specific needs with regard to human rights have not yet been fully examined by the international community. Among these groups are the elderly. While it must be clearly stated that the vast majority of elderly persons throughout the world continue to lead active lives and make valuable contributions to their families and communities, age can also constitute a jeopardy for the full enjoyment of the human rights, particularly if combined with one or more of the other factors contributing to disadvantage and discrimination, such as sex, minority status, or disability.

There are a number of international instruments which recognize that the elderly may encounter special problems. In this regard, we refer to ILO Recommendation No. 162 concerning Older Workers, adopted by the International Labor Conference in June 1980, which applies to "all workers who are liable to encounter difficulties in employment and occupation because of advancement in age." We also refer to the Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter which in Article 4 lays down the right of elderly persons to social protection, including the right to play an active part in public, social and cultural life and a guarantee of the rights of older persons institutions. The European Community in its Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers also addressed the rights of the elderly to a decent standard of living.

These international instruments all recognized the urgent need to address the human rights of older persons. While they must be applauded, they are also, unfortunately, limited in scope. With the exception of the UN Principles for Older Persons (GA resolution 46/91, which represent a statement of vision, there is no universal international human rights instrument which allows a regular monitoring and a review of the situation of older persons. Such a review can be achieved in two ways: 1)

*NGOs in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council

regularly include information on the elderly in all reports on the implementation of human rights Covenants and other relevant international human rights instruments to be considered by the monitoring bodies; or 2) design an international instrument which deals exclusively with the elimination of disadvantage and discrimination due to advancement in age.

If the World Conference on Human Rights is to truly fulfill its mandate to consider new challenges to the full realization of all human rights of men and women, it must consider the challenge of age and the way forward-looking human rights recommendations addressing the issue of age can maximize the vast potential of elderly persons around the world.



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Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Statement of the Asian Cultural Forum on Development

The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached statement submitted by the Asian Cultural Forum on Development.

Statement of the
Asian Cultural Forum on Development

On March 25-28, 1993, the eve of the Preparatory Meeting of Asian Governments, some 240 representatives of more than 110 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from about 26 countries across the Asia Pacific Region put forward a detailed human rights agenda for immediate implementation in the form of the **Bangkok NGO Declaration**, the full text and summary of which are already available, as an official document of the UN (UN DOC : A/CONF/157/ASRM/4).

The NGO representatives from the Asia Pacific Region stress the following points:

- i) There are several points to be commended in the Final Draft Declaration prepared by governments of Asia.
 - we welcome the specific sections on the rights of women and the rights of children; we reiterate the urgent need to address women's rights in both the public and private spheres of society, in particular in the family, and urge that effective steps be taken to eradicate all practices which deny women's right to equality or self determination.
 - we are relieved to find a reaffirmation of the principles in the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;
 - we support the reaffirmation of the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights; We affirm the basis of Universality of Human Rights which afford protection to all of humanity, including women, children, minorities, workers, peasants, refugees, indigenous people, disabled and the elderly. While advocating cultural pluralism, those cultural practices which derogate from Universally accepted Human Rights, in particular women's human rights, cannot be tolerated.
 - we share a concern for effective implementation of the right to development and the need arising from the situation in our region to recognise the impact of macroeconomic issues and the disastrous results of poverty, evident in the widening gap between the North and the South, the rich and the poor.
- ii) We are encouraged by the recognition of NGOs in the Final Draft Declaration and the fact that governments responded to the concerted representations by so many Asia-Pacific NGOs from day 1 of the Asia Regional meeting. We urge the widest possible participation of NGO in the World Conference.

Yet the Final Declaration in several significant respects reflects the continued attempt by many Governments of the Asia-Pacific region to avoid their human rights obligations, to put the state before the people and to avoid acknowledging their obligations to account for their failures in the promotion and protection of human rights.

- iii) Most disturbing is the apparent intention to restrict the right of self-determination to peoples under alien or colonial domination or foreign occupation. Again these governments have proved themselves incapable of giving proper recognition to the most fundamental rights of indigenous peoples.
- iv) The fear of governments in our Asia Pacific region to account for the continued violation of human rights is evident in their attempt to give primacy to national human rights mechanisms - mechanisms which we know too well that they will direct and control themselves. This is NOT accountability and offers little hope of appropriate remedies.
- v) This fear is similarly evident in the apparent attempt to limit the operations of the UN Centre for Human Rights.
- vi) Given the encouragement for States to ratify international human rights instruments in the preambular paragraphs, we cannot understand the failure to give more direct effect to this call by its inclusion in the so-called operative paragraphs.
- vii) In this regard we reiterate that governments must commit themselves to ratification without reservations of the major international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and that on the Rights of the Child (these steps would be consistent with the relevant sections on these issues in the Final Declaration).
The obligations and accountability arising from ratification cannot be seen as interference in the internal affairs of States.
- viii) We could not help but note that specific references to torture, freedom of expression and the lack of the rule of law have been deleted in the final draft of Bangkok Declaration. We are left to ask WHY!
- ix) Further evidence of the attempt to avoid accountability for their failures to protect human rights is apparent in the specific discouragement of conditionality in relation to development assistance. We emphasize that aid must always promote and protect human rights.



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Addendum

Statement by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation

The attention of the Preparatory Committee is drawn to the attached statement submitted by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status (category II), entitled "Worldwide resurgence of anti-Semitism and the concluding statement of the World Conference".

WORLDWIDE RESURGENCE OF ANTISEMITISM AND THE CONCLUDING
STATEMENT OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE

1. The emphasis of the World Conference will be oriented toward future action and the improvement of the current mechanisms promoting human rights. Therefore, the World Conference will not be dealing with an analysis of current violations, which is more properly the task of the Commission on Human Rights.
 2. However, the rise of ideologies of hatred and exclusion in many parts of the world should be addressed in the final outcome of the World Conference. The growth of these ideologies - and the recent widespread actions linked to them - are an indication of the need for increased educational programmes promoting mutual respect, tolerance and moderation.
- * * *
3. The International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) remains convinced that the persistence and resurgence of antisemitism - one of the oldest and most virulent forms of racism known to human history - should be explicitly addressed in the conclusions of the World Conference. In September, IFOR submitted a recommendation on this subject to the third session of the Preparatory Committee. (A/CONF.157/PC/46/Add.9)
 4. Aside from the examples provided in our earlier written statement, submitted to the Sub-Commission at its forty-fourth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/NGO/22), we wish to highlight some examples of the manner in which this specific ideological hatred is propagated and even taught in schools.
 5. The persistent resurgence of the "Blood Libel" accusation against Jews and Judaism must be monitored and reprimanded. We referred to several examples of this phenomenon in our 11 February 1993 oral statement to the forty-ninth session of the Commission on Human Rights. (E/CN.4/1993/SR.17)
 6. Another myth consists in the belief that a Jewish-led conspiracy seeks to control the world. The most widespread of these "conspiracy theories of history" is propagated through the century-old forgery, The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, one of the "theories" that contributed to Hitler's radical antisemitism.
 7. In a second oral statement on 19 February (E/CN.4/1993/SR.28), IFOR provided further details of the spread of such "theories", particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. The long history and the current pernicious use of this crude forgery was recently analysed in a two-volume monumental work by the French scholar and sociologist, Pierre-André Taguieff: (Les Protocols des Sages de Sion: Faux et Usages d'un Faux, Paris, Berg International, 1992).

* * *

8. French orientalist Olivier Carré's recent study shows that school handbooks in Saudi Arabia portray the Jews as the "enemies of humanity" and reiterate that the Jews seek to destroy Islam. (L'utopie islamique dans l'Orient arabe, Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, Paris, 1991, p.107 and pp.131-132) This is not the only Middle East country where similar ideological hatreds are inculcated and propagated. In such cases we are faced with the same attitude, expressed twenty-five years ago by the then Syrian Minister of Education, Suleyman Al-Khash, in a letter of 3 May 1968 to the then Director-General of UNESCO, Mr René Maheu: "The hatred which we indoctrinate into the minds of our children from their birth is sacred." (A-Thaura, journal of the Ba'ath party, Damascus, 3 May 1968)

9. On 1 June 1991, the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a stamp to commemorate "World Child Year". It shows a boy of under ten years old smashing a blue window depicting a blue Star of David, a recognized symbol of Judaism. Although this stamp was condemned by the European Parliament and the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP) requested that it be withdrawn, the stamp is still listed in the latest Iranian Catalogue of Commemorative Stamps. It can be viewed at the United Nations Philatelic Museum of the Palais des Nations in Geneva, where it was not displayed with other "World Child Day" stamps. IFOR gave full details in its oral Statement to the Commission on 3 March. (E/CN.4/1993/SR.52)

* * *

10. IFOR has already drawn attention to the resurgence of antisemitism in Central and Eastern Europe in a written statement prepared by historian Robert Wistrich, which was submitted to the last Sub-Commission. (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1992/NGO/22) In this context, a recent unfortunate development in Croatia illustrates the grave dangers when national leaders use historical distortions to guide their people.

11. Professor Wistrich pointed out that President Franjo Tudjman, in his book Wastelands of Historical Reality (1989), had reduced the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust to one million and accused the Jews of having "taken the initiative in preparing and provoking not only individual atrocities but also the mass slaughter of non-Jews, communists, partisans and Serbs."

12. This total distortion of known historical facts, for which President Tudjman made honorable amends last year, has recently been given a new life by the plans of the authorities in Zagreb to rename one of the capital's streets after Mile Budak, the former N° 2 of the independent fascist Croatian state, which was headed by the notorious Ante Pavelic during the Second World War. Mile Budak, its former Vice-Minister and Minister of Religion and Education, was executed in 1945 as a war criminal. He is still considered by the remnant of the Jewish community in Zagreb to have been one of the masterminds behind the extermination of 75% of the country's Jewish population. (Le Figaro, 24 March, 1993)

13. Neo-Nazi video "games" are now proliferating in Europe. Full details on these monstrosities - including extermination camps called "Auschwitz" - were provided by Albert Kaufmann, a teacher in a secondary school at Graz in Austria, in his statement on 24 June 1992, made at an International Conference held at UNESCO in Paris. ("Educating for Tolerance: The Case of Resurged Antisemitism")
14. A recent case in Switzerland might serve as an example of the importance of mutual respect, tolerance and understanding. In recent articles and correspondence in the press (The Jerusalem Post, édition française, sélection hebdomadaire, 16 au 22 décembre 1993; La Tribune d'Israël, janvier-février 1993), two handbooks on religious instruction in the Suisse Romande, for teachers of children from ten to eleven years old were critized by historian Paul Giniewski for inculcating a "teaching of contempt" of both Jews and the Jewish religion.
15. Mutual comprehension and attempts to find an acceptable solution have been engaged by several bodies with the competent authorities of the Canton of Vaud. It is expected that before the Preparatory Committee ends its forth session on 30 April - or before the World Conference meeting next June in Vienna - the Département de l'Instruction Publique et des Cultes of the Canton of Vaud will have resolved this issue globally, involving the unintended inculcation of antisemitism through religious teaching in public schools.
16. We have provided in this recommendation our concern in one particular field only. Special efforts should be made to monitor expressions of such ideologies in all parts of the world and remedial measures taken. IFOR feels strongly that all ideologies of hatred and exclusion must be addressed at the World Conference.